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Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Committee against Torture

Concluding observations on the initial report of Seychelles*

1. The Committee against Torture considered the initial report of Seychelles (CAT/C/SYC/1) at its 1664th and 1666th meetings, held on 30 and 31 July 2018 (CAT/C/SR.1664 and CAT/C/SR.1666), and adopted the following concluding observations at its 1677th and 1678th meetings (CAT/C/SR.1677 and CAT/C/SR.1678) held on 8 and 9 August 2018.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee regrets that the submission of the State party's initial report was 25 years late and was received only during the first week of its sixty-fourth session. It welcomes, however, the constructive dialogue via video conference with the State party's delegation and the oral replies provided to the concerns raised by the Committee. Seychelles acceded to the Convention on 5 May 1992 and was under an obligation to submit its initial report under article 19, paragraph 1, of the Convention by 3 June 1993. Each year thereafter, Seychelles was included in the list of States parties with overdue reports in the annual report which the Committee submits to the States parties and the General Assembly. By a letter dated 28 November 2014, the Committee reminded the State party about the overdue initial report and about the possibility for the Committee to proceed with a review in the absence of such a report. On 9 April 2015, the Committee invited the State party to accept the simplified reporting procedure to assist it in preparing its overdue report and reiterated the Committee's view regarding the possibility of a review in the absence of a report as a result of the extended delay in its submission. On 14 August 2017, the Committee informed the State party of its decision to review the situation in Seychelles in the absence of a report, in accordance with rule 67, paragraph 3, of its rules of procedure, while maintaining the possibility for the State party to send its initial report or to accept the simplified reporting procedure. The State party never responded to these communications or to the reminder sent on 8 February 2018. Two weeks before the sixty-fourth session was due to begin, the State party informed the Committee that it would be sending a report the following week and inquired about the possibility of conducting the constructive dialogue by video conference. The State party's report was received on 24 July 2018 and did not, therefore, allow for its translation into the official languages of the United Nations and for the presentation of alternative reports by other stakeholders, including the national human rights institution, civil society organizations, especially human rights non-governmental organizations. The constructive dialogue with the delegation of the State party took place by video conference on 30 and 31 July 2018.

* Adopted by the Committee at its sixty-fourth session (23 July–10 August 2018).

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the State party's accession to and ratification of the following international instruments:

(a) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, on 7 March 1978;

(b) Convention on the Rights of the Child, on 7 September 1990;

(c) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the First Optional Protocol thereto, on 5 May 1992;

(d) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on 5 May 1992;

(e) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on 5 May 1992;

(f) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, on 15 December 1994;

(g) Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, on 15 December 1994;

(h) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on 2 October 2009;

(i) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, on 10 August 2010;

(j) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on 1 March 2011;

(k) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, on 11 December 2012;

(l) International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, on 18 January 2017;

(m) 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, on 23 April 1980;

(n) Four Geneva Conventions and Protocols I and II thereto, on 8 November 1984;

(o) The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 22 April 2003;

(p) The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 22 June 2004;

(q) The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, on 22 June 2004.

4. The Committee also welcomes the State party's initiatives to revise its legislation in areas of relevance to the Convention, including the adoption of:

(a) The Constitution, in 1993, which includes an article on the right to dignity and the prohibition of torture;

(b) The Family Violence (Protection of Victims) Act, in 2000;

(c) The Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act, in 2014;

(d) Amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act, in 2014.

5. The Committee also welcomes the initiatives of the State party to amend its policies, programmes and administrative measures to give effect to the Convention, including the:

(a) National Plan of Action on gender-based violence 2010–2012;

(b) National Strategy on domestic violence for the period 2008–2012;

(c) Establishment of the Seychelles Human Rights Treaty Committee in 2012;

(d) Strategic Plan for the judiciary (2010–2014);

(e) Establishment by the President of the High Level Committee on prison reform and prison rehabilitation, in June 2017;

(f) Issuance of a standing invitation to the special procedures mechanism of the Human Rights Council, in 2016;

(g) Efforts made by the State party to translate a number of international human rights instruments into all official languages, including Creole, and produce related child-friendly materials.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

Offence and definition of torture in national legislation

6. While noting that article 16 of the Constitution provides for the protection of the "right to dignity" stipulating that "every person has a right to be treated with dignity worthy of a human being and not to be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment", the Committee is concerned that there are no provisions specifically prohibiting torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the criminal laws of Seychelles, that there is no definition of torture in its laws in line with article 1 of the Convention and that there is a maximum time limit of 90 days after the infraction to seize the Constitutional Court in relation to violations of the Seychellois Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms, which is part of the Constitution, and in particular of article 16, that would amount to a statute of limitations for judicial review of a violation of the constitutional prohibition of torture (arts. 1, 2 and 4).

7. **The State party should revise its legislation in order to:**

(a) **Amend the Penal Code in order to introduce the specific crime of torture and, expedite the pending amendments to the Prison Act and the Police Forces Act;**

(b) **Introduce a definition of torture that includes all the elements set out in article 1 of the Convention. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 2 (2007) on the implementation of article 2, in which it states that serious discrepancies between the definition in the Convention and the one incorporated into domestic law create actual or potential loopholes for impunity (para. 9);**

(c) **Ensure that both the crime of torture and the attempt to commit such a crime are punishable with appropriate penalties, which take into account the gravity of their nature, as set out in article 4 (2) of the Convention;**

(d) **Ensure that the prohibition of torture is absolute and non-derogable and that no exceptional circumstances, including a state of emergency or threat of war, can be used to justify the use of torture;**

(e) **Ensure, in keeping with article 2 (3) of the Convention, that obedience to superior orders cannot be invoked to justify torture and guarantee in practice the right of all law enforcement officials and military personnel to refuse to execute, as subordinates, an order from their superior officers that would result in a violation of the Convention;**

(f) **Ensure that there is no statute of limitations for the crime of torture and that, where torture offences are concerned, the granting of amnesty and pardon is inadmissible.**

Direct application of the Convention by domestic courts

8. While noting that article 48 of the Constitution provides that chapter 3 of the Constitution, which contains the Seychellois Charter of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms (articles 15 to 39 of the Constitution), is to be interpreted in such a way as not to be inconsistent with any international obligations of Seychelles relating to human rights and freedoms, the Committee is concerned that the provisions of the Convention are not directly enforceable by the courts of the Seychelles, that they must be incorporated into national legislation in order to be directly enforceable and can therefore not be applied directly by the domestic courts (arts. 2, 4 and 12).

9. **The State party should:**

(a) **Amend its legislation in order to incorporate the provisions of the Convention into national law and ensure their full and direct applicability of in national courts and that they can be invoked before them;**

(b) **Ensure that State officials, including judges, prosecutors and lawyers receive training that covers the provisions of the Convention in order to assert the rights established in those provisions and to ensure that they are taken into account and directly applicable before the national courts;**

(c) **Provide information about specific cases in which the Convention has been invoked before and applied directly by the courts;**

(d) **Widely disseminate the Convention in the State party, in the three official languages of Seychelles, including Creole.**

Abolition of the death penalty

10. While article 15 (2) of the Constitution indicates that "A law shall not provide for a sentence of death to be imposed by any court" and that the Extradition Act also prevents extradition of persons to countries where the death penalty is in force and would be applied for the offence committed by the person unless the receiving country agrees to suspend the death penalty in that particular case, the Committee is concerned that references to "the sentence of death" continue to be contained in other national legislation (arts. 2 and 16).

11. **The State party should take steps to remove the discrepancy between the Constitution and other national legislation that contains mention of "the sentence of death" in order to streamline all national laws and ensure compliance with the constitutional prohibition of the death penalty.**

Age of criminal responsibility

12. The Committee is concerned that the minimum age of criminal responsibility for certain offences in the State party is seven years (art. 2).

13. **The State party should reform the juvenile justice system and amend the Penal Code to bring the age of criminal responsibility into compliance with international standards.**

Inadmissibility of statements made as a result of torture

14. While taking note that the 1912 Judges' Rules of the King's Bench in England and English law of evidence prevail, and that confessions made involuntarily by accused parties are inadmissible as evidence before the courts of law, the Committee is concerned that coerced confessions are not outlawed specifically in national legislation (arts. 2 and 15).

15. **The State party should:**

(a) **Amend national legislation, including the Code of Criminal Procedure, in order to ensure, in law and practice, that any statement resulting from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is not invoked as evidence;**

(b) **Ensure that courts dismiss in practice all cases in which evidence was obtained as a result of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;**

(c) **Prosecute and punish officials who may have allowed evidence to be obtained as a result of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;**

(d) **Provide the necessary training for law enforcement and judiciary officials regarding the inadmissibility of coerced confessions in court;**

(e) **Ensure that officials who extract coerced confessions, including persons liable under the principle of command responsibility, are brought to justice, prosecuted and punished accordingly.**

Fundamental legal safeguards

16. While taking note of the rights enjoyed by persons under article 18 of the Constitution, the Committee is concerned that detained persons may not enjoy all fundamental legal safeguards from the outset of their deprivation of liberty, such as the right to be informed immediately of the reasons for their arrest or detention, and not as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter; that only minors, but not adults, are allowed to contact family members or other persons of their choice about their detention; about the absence of a standard medical examination from the outset of deprivation of liberty; that the 24-hour rule of bringing detained persons before a court is not always respected and that persons may be held by police without charges for up to 14 days; and that all stages of detention are not necessarily recorded in registers (art. 2).

17. **The State party should:**

(a) **Guarantee that all detained persons, including juveniles, are afforded, in law and in practice, all fundamental legal safeguards from the very outset of their deprivation of liberty, including the right to be informed immediately of the charges against them; that they have prompt access to a lawyer during all proceeding, or to free legal aid in the case of indigent persons; that they receive free interpretation services; that both adults and juveniles are able to notify a relative or another person of their choice about their detention or arrest; that they have access to a standard medical examination by an independent doctor upon their deprivation of liberty, including by a doctor of their choice upon request; that their deprivation of liberty is recorded in registers at all stages; and that they are brought before a court within 24 hours of their arrest or detention, in keeping with article 18 (5) of the Constitution;**

(b) **Establish a central register of detention with entries on all persons at all stages of their deprivation of liberty, inform the Committee of the type of information recorded and of the specific measures taken to ensure accurate record-keeping;**

(c) **Monitor the compliance by all law enforcement officials with fundamental legal safeguards, penalize any failure on the part of officials to comply and provide information on the number of complaints received regarding failure to respect fundamental legal safeguards and on the outcome of such complaints.**

Prolonged pretrial detention

18. While recognizing the existence of the habeas corpus provision in national legislation, the Committee is seriously concerned about information that, while the Constitution provides for remand prisoners to be released after six months of detention if their cases have not been heard, pretrial detention in the State party may last up to three years owing to the long delays in completing cases (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

19. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that pretrial detention is reduced to the extent possible, is exceptional and is carried out in keeping with the provisions of the Convention. The Committee requests that the State party be provided with information on any cases regarding the legality of detention brought before the Supreme Court and on their outcome. It also urges the State party to promote alternatives to pretrial detention, in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures.**

Independence of the judiciary and backlogs in dealing with cases

20. While taking note of the State party's efforts to reform the judiciary, the Committee is concerned at reports of the corruption and inefficiency of the judiciary; the large backlogs in both civil and criminal cases; and the large percentage of foreign judges who serve on non-renewable contracts ranging from two to seven years (art. 2, 12, 13 and 14).

21. **The State party should continue with its efforts to reform the judiciary; provide members of the judiciary with relevant training; take vigorous steps to eradicate corruption by conducting prompt, independent and impartial investigations into allegations of interference with the judiciary; prosecute and punish the perpetrators; ensure the independence of the judiciary from executive influence; reduce the backlog of cases, including by increasing judicial capacity and providing the judiciary with the necessary technical and financial resources to guarantee their integrity; and enhance the efficiency of judicial proceedings.**

Conditions of detention

22. While taking note of the oral explanation by the delegation and of the opening of the new detention remand facility for male detainees in April 2017 and other improvements, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The generally high incarceration rate in the State party;

(b) The three incidents of riot that took place in 2009 at the Montagne Posée prison, deaths in custody and inter-prisoner violence;

(c) The absence of separation in certain cases of convicted prisoners from those detained on remand, the incarceration of male and female prisoners sometimes in the same place of deprivation of liberty and the fact that juveniles are not always separated from adults in detention;

(d) The acute shortage and reported lack of commitment of medical personnel for persons deprived of their liberty;

(e) The alarmingly high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis among inmates and the absence of information on steps taken to prevent inmates from being infected after incarceration (arts. 2, 11 and 16).

23. **The State party should:**

(a) **Take all necessary measures to improve material conditions in all places of deprivation of liberty, in keeping with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;**

(b) **Take further steps to reduce overcrowding, in addition to those resulting from the amendments to the Misuse of Drugs Act, including alternatives to imprisonment in conformity with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures;**

(c) **Continue the expansion and construction of other facilities for both male and female prisoners and the improvement in their general living conditions;**

(d) **Put in place systems to segregate juveniles from adult prisoners, convicted prisoners from detainees on remand and male from female detainees;**

(e) **Take the necessary steps to reduce inter-prisoner violence, including by providing additional training to prison staff, and ensure prompt and independent investigations into deaths in custody, regardless of their causes;**

(f) **Continue the implementation of the "Phoenix programme" and any other rehabilitation programmes developed to facilitate the social integration of detained persons;**

(g) **As a matter of priority hire additional medical doctors, including specialists, and nurses who are committed to carrying out their jobs and ensure that**

those on duty are available around the clock, and ensure that referrals are prompt and that ambulances for specialist health care are stationed outside detention facilities;

(h) **Introduce health screening of inmates before admission to places of detention and of the entire inmate population; take steps to provide adequate treatment to persons infected with HIV/AIDS and hepatitis, and persons with psychosocial disabilities; take vigorous steps to prevent the infection in prison of inmates who are healthy on arrival; and give consideration to and examine the possible benefits and/or adverse effects of the introduction of substitution and needle exchange programmes.**

Monitoring places of detention and complaints procedure

24. While noting that the Prison Advisory Board, the National Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman and some civil society organizations are able to visit places of detention and the voluntary engagement of the State party to consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention, the Committee is concerned that the State party has not established a national system to independently monitor and inspect all places of detention, including psychiatric institutions and social care homes, and the lack of an independent mechanism to receive and investigate complaints (arts. 2, 11, 12, 13 and 16).

25. **The State party should:**

(a) **Establish a national system for the independent, effective and regular monitoring and inspection of all places of detention, including psychiatric institutions and social care homes, without prior notice; in which representatives are able to meet in private with detainees and receive complaints; is institutionally independent; from which publicly available reports on the findings of inspections are issued and whose representatives are able to raise with the authorities conditions or conduct in places of detention amounting to torture or ill-treatment;**

(b) **Ensure that complainants are protected against any ill-treatment, intimidation or reprisals as a consequence of their complaint;**

(c) **Ensure that all complaints of torture or ill-treatment are promptly investigated in an impartial manner and that suspected perpetrators are immediately suspended from duty during the investigation, duly tried and, if found guilty, punished in a manner that is commensurate with the gravity of their acts;**

(d) **Ensure that the authorities conduct investigations on their own initiative, whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that an act of torture or ill-treatment has been committed.**

National Human Rights Commission

26. While taking note of the ongoing legislative process to enact the National Human Rights Commission bill, the Committee is concerned that the National Human Rights Commission, which was established under the Protection of Human Rights Act 2009 does not comply with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) (art. 2).

27. **The State party should strengthen the National Human Rights Commission by ensuring adequate financial and staffing resources to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively and independently, in compliance with the Paris Principles, and with the principles of pluralism of staff and their selection by a clear, transparent and participatory process, and should encourage it to seek accreditation by the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The State party should also expedite the adoption of the Seychelles Human Rights Commission bill.**

Non-refoulement and asylum

28. While noting that the State party has acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and to its 1967 Protocol, the Committee is concerned that the State party does not have a national legislative asylum framework, that there is no functioning national asylum system, including for refugee status determination, and that there are no provisions in domestic law prohibiting non-refoulement of persons who may require international protection (arts. 2 and 3).

29. **The State party should:**

(a) **Comply with its non-refoulement obligations under article 3 of the Convention by ensuring the proper screening and identifying of persons who may be in need of international protection and providing them with access to asylum procedures before proceeding with expulsion or deportation, in order to prevent them from being returned to countries where they may risk being subjected to torture;**

(b) **Enact asylum legislation and establish a functioning national asylum system that provides for fair and efficient refugee status determination procedures, in line with international standards;**

(c) **Designate or establish a government body responsible for receiving and processing claims from asylum seekers and other persons who may require international protection;**

(d) **Request the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide training in relation to refugee law and on refugee status determination procedures.**

Ill-treatment of non-citizens and stateless persons

30. While taking note of the explanation of the delegation of the State party that Seychelles does not have an indigenous population and is inhabited by settlers and migrants of different races, colours and cultures, the Committee is concerned at reports that:

(a) The considerable number of Chagos Islanders who have been deprived of their native land for almost 50 years, sustaining moral and ethical suffering amounting to inhuman treatment, are still stateless because they have not been able to acquire Seychelles citizenship despite residing in the State party for a long time;

(b) Foreign workers may at times be subjected to ill-treatment, discrimination, bad living conditions and sanitation, lower wages and non-payment of salaries, which may amount to forced labour and inhuman treatment (arts. 3, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16).

31. **The State party should:**

(a) **Take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures, including accession to the relevant international instruments, to prevent the ill-treatment of stateless persons, in particular of Chagos Islanders, by integrating and granting citizenship to those persons who are entitled to it, including due to extended residence in Seychelles;**

(b) **Ensure that non-citizens do not suffer abuse and ill-treatment, including with regard to living conditions and work-related matters, and take vigorous steps to prevent forced labour and ill-treatment;**

(c) **Be encouraged to continue considering the ratification of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, which the State party has indicated to other United Nations bodies that it is doing.**

Universal jurisdiction and extradition treaties

32. The Committee is concerned at the absence of specific legislation in the State party that would enable it to establish universal jurisdiction over the crime of torture; at the absence of information on whether bilateral and multilateral treaties adhered to by the State

party make torture an extraditable offence; and whether such treaties apply in case of crimes enumerated in article 4 of the Convention (arts. 5, 8 and 9).

33. **The State party should take all the measures necessary to ensure the exercise of universal jurisdiction over persons responsible for acts of torture; ensure that torture is considered an extraditable offence in bilateral and multilateral treaties regarding extradition; ensure that the Convention can be invoked as a legal basis for extradition with regard to the crimes enumerated in article 4 when receiving requests for extradition from States with which it does not have an extradition treaty; and provide the Committee with information on instances in which the Convention has been invoked in judicial decisions regarding extradition and universal jurisdiction.**

Corporal punishment of children

34. The Committee is concerned that corporal punishment of children is not explicitly and unequivocally prohibited in alternative care, in all day care settings, in penal institutions and in the home, since the Children Act 1982 allows for reasonable chastisement (arts. 2 and 16).

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party amend its legislation to expressly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, in particular in public institutions, through acts or omissions by State agents and others who engage the responsibility of the State under the Convention, and explicitly repeal the right to inflict reasonable chastisement under the Children Act 1982.**

Training

36. The Committee is concerned that specific training on the provisions of the Convention and in particular on the absolute prohibition of torture, is not part of the training of public officials such as police and law enforcement officers, military officers, prison staff and judicial personnel. It is also concerned that the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is not part of the mandatory training provided to medical personnel and other persons engaged in the custody, interrogation or treatment of persons subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment (art. 10).

37. **The State party should:**

(a) **Ensure that police and law enforcement officers, military officers, prison staff and judicial personnel receive training on the provisions of the Convention and in particular on the absolute prohibition of torture; as well as on how to deal with the threats posed by terrorism and piracy and on the protection of the rights of persons suspected of terrorism and piracy;**

(b) **Indicate that breaches of the Convention will not be tolerated and that they will be investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted;**

(c) **Ensure that medical personnel and other persons engaged in the custody, interrogation or treatment of persons subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment receive mandatory training on the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;**

(d) **Develop and implement a methodology to assess the effectiveness and impact of any such training;**

(e) **Provide training to relevant public officials on non-coercive methods of investigation that preclude the use of torture.**

Trafficking in human beings

38. Noting that the State party is in the midst of prosecuting its first case of trafficking in human beings (for purposes of labour exploitation), the Committee is nevertheless concerned at reports of the transport of young women into the State party on private aircraft who may be victims of trafficking amounting to inhuman treatment, and at the reported

absence of action by immigration officers with regard to their entry into the country. The Committee also regrets the lack of response by the State party as to whether allegations of possible corruption among officials regarding such alleged incidents have been investigated and is concerned at reports that no victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation have been identified as such in the State party, which raises further concerns as to whether the State party has established appropriate protocols for identifying possible victims of human trafficking (arts. 2, 12, 13, 14 and 16).

39. **The State party should:**

(a) **Investigate reports of young women entering the country on private aircraft for purposes of sexual exploitation amounting to inhuman treatment, prosecute the perpetrators and, if they are found guilty, punish the traffickers and government officials or agents if they have been engaged in trafficking or assisting in trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation or labour exploitation;**

(b) **Ensure that measures are in place to identify possible victims of trafficking and establish protocols in that regard;**

(c) **Ensure that immigration officers and other relevant personnel are trained to identify and take action in such cases.**

Violence against women and gender-based violence

40. While taking note that the State party has adopted the Family Violence (Protection of Victims) Act and is working on a domestic violence act, the Committee is concerned at the high incidence of violence against women, including those in detention, and the problems faced by the authorities in gathering data on violence against women or gender-based violence that may arise through acts or omissions by State agents and others that engage the responsibility of the State in accordance with the Convention (arts. 2, 12, 13, 14 and 16).

41. **The State party should:**

(a) **Expedite the adoption of the domestic violence act;**

(b) **Collect comprehensive statistics on all forms of violence against women, including those in detention, through acts or omissions by State agents and others that engage the responsibility of the State in accordance with the Convention;**

(c) **Strengthen its efforts to ensure that the police respond appropriately to complaints of all forms of violence against women and establish an effective and independent complaints mechanism for victims of violence;**

(d) **Ensure that all allegations of violence are registered and are promptly, impartially and effectively investigated, the perpetrators prosecuted and, if convicted, punished with commensurate sanctions;**

(e) **Provide mandatory training to all law enforcement officials, judges and others who interact with victims of all forms of violence against women;**

(f) **Ensure that all victims of violence against women obtain redress.**

Follow-up procedure

42. The Committee requests the State party to provide, by 10 August 2019, information on follow-up to the Committee's recommendations regarding fundamental legal safeguards; prolonged pretrial detention; conditions of detention; and the National Human Rights Commission (see paras. 17 (a), (b) and (c); 19, 23 (a), (b) and (g); and 27). In that context, the State party is invited to inform the Committee about its plans for implementing within the coming reporting period, some or all of the remaining recommendations in the concluding observations.

Other issues

43. **The Committee invites the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and any other core United Nations human rights treaties to which it is not yet party.**

44. **The State party is invited to submit its common core document, in accordance with the requirements contained in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties (HRI/GEN.2/Rev.6).**

45. **The Committee invites the State party to consider availing itself of the technical support, capacity-building and training offered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and, where relevant, by UNHCR.**

46. **The State party is requested to disseminate widely the report submitted to the Committee and the present concluding observations in all official languages, including Creole, through official websites, the media and non-governmental organizations.**

47. **The State party is invited to submit its next report, which will be its second periodic report, by 10 August 2022. For that purpose, the Committee invites the State party to accept, by 10 August 2019, the simplified reporting procedure, consisting in the transmittal, by the Committee to the State party, of a list of issues prior to the submission of the report. The State party's response to that list of issues will constitute its second periodic report under article 19 of the Convention.**